



Rebuilding Rainier

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Mount Rainier National Park

FLOOD RECOVERY PROGRESS

The park continues to move forward on repairing the damage from November's flooding. Here are key accomplishments from the past few weeks and what's coming up in January.

Utilities

The lights are on again at Longmire and Paradise! With the installation of a temporary overhead power line at Kautz Creek as the last repair segment, commercial power was restored December 20th. A permanent, underground power line will be installed during road repairs at Kautz Creek.

After two days of extraordinary effort, workers completed the emergency excavation of the Edith Creek reservoir and water intake. The crew dug out as much sediment as possible in the deep snow, ensuring a spring water supply for Paradise.

Kautz Creek Area

The Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) has delivered final drawings for the Nisqually Road repair at Kautz Creek. The plan calls for installation of three 30-inch culverts and two 12-foot culverts to improve drainage. The design accommodates the new river channel and should protect the road from a 50-year flood event.

The Road Crew will begin installation of the 30-inch culverts as soon as they arrive. They'll also regrade the road ditch and line it with rock. Upstream channelization and installation of the large culverts will take place when the culverts are delivered in a few weeks.



Workers excavate the Edith Creek waterhead through loads of snow!

Repair of damaged riprap at the base of the Kautz Creek bridge is also about to begin. Maintenance and resources staff developed a plan to mitigate resource impacts and protect and restore the viewing terrace.

Milepost 5.2

Based on recommendations from FHWA, the park has established a load limit of 15,000 lbs. per axle at Milepost 5.2. The road is also restricted to one lane due to slope instability.

Resource and maintenance staff collaborated to lay out an access road to the base of the damaged slope below the highway. The road will be 15 feet wide and hardened with fabric and rock. The Road Crew has begun construction of the access road.

Milepost 9.1

On December 18th the park decided to repair the road within the existing alignment, and that the work will be done in-house. We're awaiting a final design from FHWA.

Westside Road

Repair of the two washouts on the Westside Road between the Nisqually Road and the gate is almost complete. The Road Crew will clear the road between the gate and Dry Creek of downed trees and debris as time allows.

Carbon River Road

Superintendent Dave Uberuaga recently hiked to Ipsut Creek to see the damage firsthand. He'll soon form a team to develop plans for Carbon River. They'll have their first site visit by the end of January.



Ranger Jim Hinote describes flood impacts at Sunshine Point

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WEEKEND PROGRAMS

Sunshine Point Walk

Saturdays and Sundays, 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., and 2:00 p.m. Join a ranger for a ¾ mile round-trip walk to view flood damage and recovery efforts at Sunshine Point. Meet at the Nisqually Gate.

Westside Road Walk

Sundays at 1:00 p.m. Rangers will lead a 2½ mile round-trip walk through Sunshine Point to the beginning of the Westside Road. Meet at the Nisqually Gate.

Evening Program

Saturdays at 7:00 p.m. Attend an illustrated program about flood damage and its broader implications for park management and planning. Call 360-569-2211x.6131 for location.

Flood Walk at Longmire

Saturdays at 3:00 p.m. National Park Inn guests are invited to join a ranger for a guided walk followed by a presentation about the flood.

NATIONAL PARK INN OPEN WEEKENDS

The National Park Inn will be open Fridays and Saturdays until the park reopens. Inn guests will park at Guest Services, Inc. in Ashford and ride a shuttle to the hotel.

NISQUALLY ROAD CLOSED FOR VISITOR SAFETY

Visitors on foot will now have limited access to the park road from the Nisqually Entrance. "We've got trucks delivering rock and heavy equipment at work 6 days a week. It's just not safe to have people walking on the road under those conditions," said Superintendent Dave Uberuaga. Rangers contacted as many as two hundred people per day at the Nisqually Entrance over the holidays.

The main park road from the Nisqually Entrance to the Westside Road intersection will be open for pedestrian and bicycle traffic on Sundays from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Westside Road will also be open to walkers, providing the opportunity for longer hikes. At all other times the Nisqually and Westside Roads are closed.

PARTNERS STEP UP TO (AND PASS) THE PLATE!

In response to flood damage at Mount Rainier, Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI) has committed \$75,000 to recovery efforts and is encouraging its customers to join in the support effort. All eight of REI's Washington stores are distributing self-mailer remit envelopes as bag stuffers. The envelopes invite customers to donate to Washington's National Park Fund and to volunteer with Washington Trails Association work parties this spring. Funds raised by Washington's National Park Fund will support recovery and restoration projects, with 100 percent of the donations providing direct support to Mount Rainier National Park. REI's website home page also provides a link for donations to the effort (www.rei.com).

The Student Conservation Association (SCA) will provide extra support to Mount Rainier this year in a different way. SCA has committed to provide the park with staff to perform a variety of jobs: coordinating volunteers, managing partnerships with other non-profits, and more. They will also train and supervise additional crews to assist with trail work. If there is a silver lining behind the storm clouds that caused the floods, it is the opportunity to cultivate stewardship for the park through efforts like these.

Together we preserve, for future generations, the natural and cultural resources in Mount Rainier National Park. Through a variety of high quality park experiences, we promote park values, personal connections, and responsibility for the environment in our local and global communities. With integrity, teamwork, pride and motivation, we demonstrate environmental leadership and deepen our understanding of the park's ecosystems. We value our diverse range of individual contributions by showing respect and concern for each other and the park. The Mountain inspires stewardship. Its protection and preservation is our legacy.